

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BUCAR 03210 250924Z

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ACTION FBO-01

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9457

INFO AMEMBASSY VIENNA

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE BUCHAREST 3210

FOR A/FBO CLEM RALSTON AND EUR/EX JOAN CLARK

VIENNA FOR REGIONAL B&F OFFICER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ABLD, RO

SUBJECT: NEW CHANCERY AND RESIDENCE: MAINTENANCE OF
PRESENT CHANCERY

REF: A. BARNES/RALSTON LETTER APRIL 26, 1974

B. BARNES/CLARK LETTER APRIL 26, 1974

1. SINCE MY LETTERS OF LATE APRIL THERE HAVE BEEN THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS. WHEN I SAW DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER GHENEA IN EARLY MAY, HE SAID GOR WAS PREPARED TO SELECT A SITE IN THE WASHINGTON DIPLOMATIC ENCLAVE (THIS IS A REVERSAL OF THE EARLIER ROMANIAN POSITION). IN EXCHANGE ROMANIANS WOULD OFFER US A SITE IN THE LAKE REGION ALONG SOSEAU NORDULUI WHICH WAS SCHEDULED TO BE DEVELOPED AS A COMBINATION DIPLOMATIC, SHOPPING AND RESIDENTIAL AREA. GHENEA PROMISED WE COULD OFFICIALLY INSPECT THE SITE WITHIN TWO WEEKS AND COULD THEN BEGIN TO TALK IN MORE CONCRETE TERMS. WE HAVE BEEN WAITING EVER SINCE. WHEN I CALLED ON MAYOR CIOARA IN LATE MAY HE HAD NO NEWS. HOLD-UP SEEMS TO BE THAT THE DEVELOPMENT OF THIS AREA IS PART OF AN OVERALL REVISION OF THE BUCHAREST CITY PLAN WHICH REQUIRES CEAUSESCU'S PERSONAL

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PAGE 02 BUCAR 03210 250924Z

OK. I RAN INTO THE MAYOR JULY 19 AND HE TOLD ME HE

EXPECTED FINALLY TO HAVE ALL THE NECESSARY CLEARANCES IN TWO-THREE WEEKS SO WE (AND A NUMBER OF OTHER EMBASSIES) COULD SEE THE AREA. FROM MY SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS SINCE APRIL, IT IS CLEAR THAT CITY IS NOT PREPARED TO LET US HAVE THE ITALIAN SITE ON CALEA VICTOREIE EITHER BELOW THE EARLIER PRICE OR PROBABLY EVEN AT THAT COST.

2. EVEN ASSUMING THE PROPOSED NEW BUILDING SITE IS FOUND ACCEPTABLE WE WOULD HAVE TO REMAIN IN PRESENT CHANCERY FOR A GOODLY NUMBER OF YEARS. DESPITE THE IMPROVEMENTS ACHIEVED THROUGH THE MAJOR RELOCATION OF EMBASSY SECTIONS LAST YEAR, WE ARE STILL CRAMPED AND CROWDED IN MOST AREAS OF THE BUILDING WHILE OTHER AREAS ARE NOT (AND CANNOT BE WITHOUT SOME - AND IN SOME CASES MAJOR - STRUCTURAL CHANGES) FULLY UTILIZED. EVERY ADDITION TO THE STAFF, HOWEVER WELCOME OTHERWISE, MAKES THE SPACE SITUATION WORSE. WE HAVE SOME THOUGHTS OURSELVES ON HOW TO MAKE OUR OPERATIONS MORE EFFECTIVE THROUGH BETTER SPACE UTILIZATION, BUT HAVE PRESSING NEED FOR FBO PROFESSIONAL ADVICE AND APPROVAL AT THIS STAGE.

3. ADDITIONALLY, ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT NECESSARY TO SUPPORT OUR INCREASED ACTIVITIES IS PLACING A HAZARDOUS BURDEN ON CHANCERY WIRING SYSTEM WHICH, AS DEPARTMENT IS AWARE, HAS BEEN SUPERIMPOSED OVER THE YEARS ON BASIC NETWORK ORIGINALLY DESIGNED TO SERVICE 19TH CENTURY RESIDENTIAL BUILDING. OVERLOADED AND OFTEN-REPAIRED CIRCUITS, IN MANY CASES WITH MAIN LINES USING WIRE AND CABLE OF NOW INADEQUATE GAUGE SIZES, RESULTED LAST WEEK IN SHORT CIRCUIT BURN IN A FLAMMABLE AREA IN DCM'S OFFICE BUT FORTUNATELY DID NOT CAUSE SERIOUS DAMAGE. WHILE WE ESTIMATE THAT RISK TO OUR COMMUNICATIONS CAPABILITY BECAUSE OF POWER FAILURE IS SMALL, IT TOO NEVERTHELESS EXISTS. BASED ON INSPECTION BY NEW RESIDENT SEABEE OF BUS LINES AND INTERNAL ELECTRICAL NETWORK, I BELIEVE WE NEED QUALIFIED ELECTRICAL ENGINEER, PREFERABLY ACCOMPANYING FBO REPRESENTATIVE, TO INSPECT CHANCERY'S LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PAGE 03 BUCAR 03210 250924Z

WIRING SYSTEM, AND TO MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ITS REPLACEMENT OR REPAIR TO AVOID FURTHER DISRUPTIVE OR POSSIBLE DANGEROUS POWER FAILURES.

4. WITH REGARD TO RESIDENCE, WE HAVE SEEN FOUR POSSIBLE REPLACEMENT HOUSES, TWO OF THEM WITH ENA SALVI THIS PAST WEEK. NONE PRESENTED ANY ADVANTAGE OVER OUR PRESENT LOCATION. WE ARE TOLD IT IS

UNLIKELY ANYTHING ELSE WILL BE AVAILABLE TO BE SEEN BEFORE SEPTEMBER. WE ARE PROCEEDING MEANWHILE WITH MRS. SALVI'S HELP TO REFURBISH PRESENT RESIDENCE BUT BEARING IN MIND WHATEVER WE DO MIGHT EVENTUALLY NEED TO BE USED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE IN A NEW RESIDENCE.

5. MY ORIGINAL HOPE HAD BEEN TO ASK FOR FBO AND EUR/EX REPRESENTATIVES TO COME TO BUCHAREST TO LOOK AT PRESENT CHANCERY, NEW CHANCERY SITE AND NEW RESIDENCE SITES ALL AT THE SAME TIME BUT THIS NO LONGER SEEMS POSSIBLE. AFTER OUR RECENT WIRING ACCIDENT I AM INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE PRESENT BUILDING WHICH HAS GOT TO BE BOTH SAFE AND AT LEAST MORE EFFECTIVELY UTILIZED FOR AS LONG AS WE REMAIN IN IT. I THEREFORE URGENTLY REQUEST THAT FBO WASHINGTON SEND REPRESENTATIVES TO BUCHAREST AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO MAKE THOROUGH SPACE UTILIZATION AND WIRING STUDY, MAKE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PRESENT CHANCERY, AND TO INSPECT SITE FOR NEW CHANCERY WHICH HOPEFULLY CAN BY THEN BE SEEN. RESIDENCE SITES IF ANY COULD ALSO BE INSPECTED. NEW ADMIN OFFICER MYERS ARRIVES AT POST ABOUT JULY 26 AND IT WOULD BE USEFUL IF FBO OFFICIALS MAKE THEIR VISIT SOON AFTER MYERS ARRIVES BUT BEFORE AUGUST 19 POPULATION CONFERENCE IF POSSIBLE. LATTER PART AUGUST, AND EARLY SEPTEMBER ALSO POSSIBLE OF COURSE. WOULD BE GLAD TO HAVE EUR/EX REPRESENTATIVE TOO IF THIS WERE USEFUL FROM BUREAU'S STANDPOINT.

6. WOULD APPRECIATE EARLY INDICATION OF WHAT YOU ARE ABLE TO DO TO HELP.
BARNES

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